

REMARKS

After entry of the present Amendment, claims 1, 3-16, and 18-41 remain in the application. Specifically, claims 1, 3, 4, and 6-8 have been amended, claims 5, 9-16, and 18 remain unchanged, and claim 2 has been canceled. Claim 17 was previously canceled. New claims 19-41 have been added.

Based on the indication of allowed claims 2-9, 12, 16, and 18 by the Examiner (described immediately below), the instant claims are now in condition for allowance. No new matter has been added in this Amendment.

Claims Amendments and Comments

On pages 2 and 3 of the instant Office Action, the Examiner indicates that claims 2-9, 12, 16, and 18 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim (i.e., claim 1), but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

As such, in an effort to facilitate prosecution of the pending application and obtain a Notice of Allowance, the Applicants have taken the allowed subject matter. Specifically, the Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to include the elements of claim 2, such that allowed claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form as amended claim 1. Claims 3 and 4 have been amended to now depend from claim 1, rather than from claim 2. Claims 6 and 7 have been amended merely to add a missing comma. The present Amendment is not

an admission that claim 1, as originally presented, lacks novelty or is obvious and the Applicants maintain the right to pursue claim 1, as originally presented, in a continuation application.

New independent claim 20 is allowed claim 6 rewritten in independent form, with support in original claims 1 and 6. New independent claim 29 is allowed claim 7 rewritten in independent form, with support in original claims 1 and 7. New independent claim 33 is allowed claim 12 rewritten in independent form, with support in original claims 1 and 12. New independent claim 34 is allowed claim 16 rewritten in independent form, with support in original claims 1 and 16.

The remaining new dependent claims have been added merely to claim certain embodiments of the present invention, and all ultimately depend from an allowed claim. New claims 21, 23-28, 35, and 37-41 are merely repeats of many of the dependent claims directed toward original claim 1, which is now in condition for allowance. New claims 19, 22, 30, and 36 claim certain intermediate embodiments of the means for introducing additives into the mixture, with support found in original claims 8 and 9, and paragraph [0039] of the original specification. Claim 8 has been amended to now depend from new claim 19 rather than from original claim 7.

Conclusions

The Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1, as amended, as well as independent claims 20, 29, 33, and 34, are both novel and non-obvious over the disclosure,

teachings, and suggestions of the prior art. As such, these claims, as well as the claims that depend therefrom, are in condition for allowance.

Based on the indication of allowable subject matter, the Applicants respectfully request the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney if the Examiner has any concerns with one or more of the new dependent claims that may be remedied, for example, by an Examiner's amendment rather than by another Office Action. Once again, the Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

If any additional fees are necessary to respond to the outstanding Office Action, you are hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 08-2789 in the name of Howard & Howard Attorneys PLLC.

Respectfully submitted,

HOWARD & HOWARD ATTORNEYS PLLC

Date: October 27, 2010

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